Exclusive: Homebody of 'Tylenol Lawsuits' Allege Retailers, Manufacturers Knew Acetaminophen During Pregnancy Could Cause Autism, ADHD

Attorney Mark Lanier discovered the basis for lawsuits — which allege acetaminophen use during pregnancy can cause children to be born with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) — in Tylenol's own internal documents, which were produced in discovery.

Lanier, founder and CEO of the Houston-based Lanier Law Firm, has assembled several high-profile product litigation lawsuits, told The Defender:

"Autism and mental disorders are a huge problem in America that would touch a huge number of Americans. We believe the science indicates that Tylenol is the cause of a significant portion of that problem. We've got the documents that we believe show the tobacco tactics are, and we expect to prove that in a court.

"The point is to take Tylenol off the market. The purpose of this lawsuit is not a warning on it so that doctors and expectant mothers are able to make an informed decision of what risks they're willing to expose their child to."

The U.S. Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation (JPML) last year appointed Senior U.S. District Judge Denise Cote to oversee the growing number of lawsuits brought by families, resulting in all of the claims being transferred to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Judge Cote last month appointed a special master to preside over all federal Tylenol autism lawsuits.

The lawsuits allege retailers, including Walmart, CVS, Walgreens and others, failed to warn consumers about the risks of taking Tylenol during pregnancy. The lawsuits also allege manufacturers, including Kenvue, failed to warn consumers.

Lawsuits also are expected against Johnson & Johnson for its alleged role in encouraging widespread acetaminophen use during pregnancy, which could have led to the rising rates of autism and ADHD.

Products that contain the drug include Tylenol, Infra Safrron Plus, DayQuil, NyQuil, Excedrin, Sudafed, Robitussin and some generics and store brand formulations.

The lawsuits allege the products have been marketed as safe for pregnant women since the 1950s, despite the existence of dozens of peer-reviewed studies showing acetaminophen poses serious risks to pregnant women and children.

Lawsuits are being pursued on behalf of children under age 15 who were diagnosed with autism or ADHD after their mothers took acetaminophen at age 20 or who were diagnosed with ADHD between the ages of 6 and 21.

The Defender examined some of the currently pending lawsuits making such allegations and the scientific literature regarding the risk of acetaminophen use during pregnancy and spoke with one of the attorneys involved with the Tylenol litigation.

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Lawyer: 'We're talking about thousands, tens of thousands' of cases

Lanier, one of the attorneys appointed to lead counsel in the Tylenol multidistrict litigation (MDL), told The Defender, "I think at this point we're in the tens of thousands. We're talking about thousands, and we're not done, we'll have about thousands, tens of thousands of cases."

Although each of the Tylenol ASD and ADHD lawsuits will proceed separately, the consolidation into the MDL means "consolidated discovery" for lawsuits that are common to all claims" and occurs with the evidence that available to each plaintiff's attorney, Lanier explained.

Judge Cote likely will establish a "bellwether" process where pregnancy-related and asymmetrical claims will be prepared for early trial dates, to help the parties gauge the potential ranges for resolution in certain evidence and testimony about the link between Tylenol and autism that will be repeated throughout the litigation.

The outcomes of these "bellwether" trials will not impact any other individual case but may have a significant impact on the average settlement amount that will be agreed upon for each claim.

If the "bellwethers" cases do not reach settlement, Judge Cote may remand them to the U.S. District Courts for trial.

Special Master Ferrell A. Zilly, a dispute resolution and settlement consulting attorney, has been appointed by Judge Cote to oversee the Tylenol MDL and is being assisted by thirteen paralegals — so that the Court can better understand the scope of the growing litigation while planning for discovery and pretrial proceedings."

[Use appointment as group of lawyers — including Lanier — to help manage the litigation, which is expected to grow to include tens of thousands of cases, each individual plaintiff will maintain their right to settle separately.

Lanier told The Defender that the MDL and the ongoing cases were split into two sections, he explained:

"The first section is one that focuses on science. The science really bears out the truth that Tylenol can be a cause of these brain development disorders.

"If so, then the next stage becomes one of trying to understand what knowledge the companies had, were the companies responsible in the way they marketed Tylenol, and what did they do to warn consumers, and what kind of damages people sustained as a result."

In July 2022, several dozen plaintiffs and retailers unsuccessfully opposed the consolidation of the disparate ASD and ADHD lawsuits, claiming that there was not yet enough cases filed to warrant centralization.

In January 2023, Walmart moved to dismiss two of the lawsuits filed by parents who said they used the retailer's Equate labels, which contain acetaminophen, during their pregnancies. The motion to dismiss argued that consumers "have not pleaded that [Walmart] had actual knowledge" that the medicine was dangerous.

Moms who took acetaminophen denied children's developmental issues

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In November 2021, Dr. Jean Kaplowitz and her wife, Cowlishi Liberto of the Kaplowitz Law Firm, filed a lawsuit on behalf of their son, Jonathan Kaplowitz, who was born with autism and ADHD.

Jonathan Kaplowitz, who is now 18, was diagnosed with ASD, Cowlishi claims of the complaint, when he was 3 years old.

Stratton Law Firm, which was founded in the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota on Aug. 2, 2022, claims Walmart failed to warn pregnant women about the autism risks posed by acetaminophen products.

Stratton said the risk acetaminophen products between three and six times. The lawsuit, filed on behalf of Jessica Lynn Hoffman and her son, A.H., in May 2017, the largest-reporting developmental problems in U.S. history.

U.S. was diagnosed with autism in January 2021, remained non-verbal as of the time of the lawsuit's filing and suffers from severe developmental delays as well.

Stratton said Walmart was aware that its store brand Equate labels contained acetaminophen but engineer warned and failed to warn consumers.

Abby Horowitz sued Costco in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California on Dec. 1, 2022, alleging that her son's autism was caused by Costco containing acetaminophen without warning about autism risks for children.

Horowitz took acetaminophen three and six times per week for pain relief during her two pregnancies. Her two children, J.S. and C.C., were born in 2014 and 2016, respectively. J.S. was diagnosed with autism in December 2016, and her autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and ADHD, respectively.

Horowitz claimed in another lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York that Costco knew or should have known that acetaminophen products "pose a substantial risk of autism and ADHD when taken during pregnancy."

Costco's motion to dismiss argued that Horowitz's claims were "barred by the statute of limitations."

A growing number of scientific, peer-reviewed studies identified links between acetaminophen use by pregnant women and the onset of ASD and ADHD, as well other developmental problems, in their children.

Dozens of these studies are referenced in the Tylenol lawsuits and cited in children's risks by many MDLs. The expert lawsuits associated with Tylenol's increase in ASD has been documented as having begun during this time period.

In January 2013, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a drug safety communication warning, stating acetaminophen products should be avoided during pregnancy. The FDA's warning was based on studies that "strongly suggested" to confirm safety risks for certain children from acetaminophen exposure.

However, numerous peer-reviewed scientific studies appear to show that such a link:

- Data from the ongoing Boston Birth Cohort Study, sponsored by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, has indicated that "exposure to acetaminophen in the womb may increase a child's risk for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder," according to a 2019 study.
- A February 2022 study published in the European Journal of Pediatrics found that "[t]wo of evidence that the commonly used remedy for pain and fever may be linked to ADHD," according to a study published in the journal Nature Medicine. Dr. William Parker, lead researcher on the study, told The Defender at the time that "acetaminophen would never be approved for pediatric use by today's regulatory standards."

kind of double whammy.

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MH **Mad Hatter** · 3 days ago
Johnson and Johnson,,,,,,, Say no more

1 0 · Reply · Share ›

L **lakewoodsteve** → Mad Hatter · 2 days ago
ALL FDA CDC bought & paid for approved Toxins! Godless nations deserve no better!

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Terri · 2 days ago
Thank you CHDef and Mr. Nevradakis.
No acetaminophen during pregnancy or for children. Share this article. Warn your loved ones.

4 0 · Reply · Share ›

S. R. · 3 days ago
I hope the lawyers involved take note of what happened with the Omnibus Autism Proceedings about ten years ago, and take precautions to make sure the same jaw-dropping injustice (i.e. 5,000+ lawsuits dismissed with the wave of a hand without even a hearing, blatant burying of evidence) doesn't repeat itself here.

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William H Warrick III MD · 3 days ago
Excedrin and Goody's are Aspirin and Pregnant Women can't take Aspirin because that causes a problem with the Newborn, so what can Pregnant Women take for a Headache?

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Leslie N · 3 days ago
isn't it so coincidental that someone has finally proposed a link to autism with tylenol? No, it couldn't possibly be vaxxes that cause autism during pregnancy and early childhood. Lets blame tylenol instead. And I love whom is doing the studies too. Why after ALL these years of nobody addressing the autism issue, it's happening NOW after the largest vaccine rollout in history. They simply are looking for a scapegoat in the future for when so many more children will develop autism after these covid jabs.

I'm not saying its not possible that tylenol is a cause, but why now?

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orwellingood → Leslie N · 3 days ago edited
Why, what's so special about "now"? The "largest vaccine rollout in history" began two years ago, and prior to that, there had already been a major settlement against Tylenol makers. There was no COVID jab then, so who were they apparently trying to get off the hook then? How about just calling a spade a spade sometimes instead of straw-grasping that tens of thousands of lawsuits being filed by ordinary people around the country are somehow some giant conspiracy to protect Pfizer? ESPECIALLY since these lawsuits, in many cases, concern kids that got sick long before COVID and COVID jabs? Sheesh!

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Jennifo → orwellingood · 3 days ago edited
It's the traditional vaccine industry (I'm not talking about the clot shot) that has toxic deadly materials in them as well. Period. I have studied too much to not tell the truth. I regret terribly that I bought into this lie with my kids. Thankfully, thus far they are healthy adults. BFK...it has fought for years to protect our kids from deadly shots. If the lettered agencies are trying to tell us something...wait for an upper punch.

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lakewoodsteve → orwellingood · 2 days ago
The 1914 rushed into production Fort Riley Kansas vaccine gave us patient Zero for the 500 million kill [so-called] Spanish Flu [No mendacity there, right?] It's like calling OUR / USA's patented/ Gain of Function SARS 2 Cv 19, the Wuhan Flu! [No mendacity there either, right?]

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beanerds → orwellingood · 3 days ago
Did you read what he said ? , No by the sound of your reply _ he said " LOOKING FOR A SCAPEGOAT IN THE FUTURE."

1 3 · Reply · Share ›

Trbobitch → orwellingood · 3 days ago
Quiet down, Fed.

1 1 · Reply · Share ›

Bradens Mom → Leslie N · 3 days ago
Exactly! My son was neuro-typical and ahead of the curve crushing all his milestones early! Then came the "well baby" check & he was disabled within 48 hours of his vaccines. I know what happened to him! We all know what the research shows & its Thimerosal.

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Caroline Cary Davidson → Leslie N · 3 days ago
going after them because they can. there's no religious-like worship of Tylenol. the lawyers smell $$. there's some preliminary science but one of the things that will be really difficult to prove will be that it's a direct cause.
I predict that they will eventually throw out all cases where the mom took ANY other drug or had ANY other risk factor.

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catherine · 2 days ago
This is devastating news. I know of two children whose mothers took these products and the children have delayed development problems. I must pass this information on to them.

Why is it that our supposed health protection and safety agencies-the CDC and FDA-are two of the most anti-human in history?

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UnionMember · 3 days ago
We knew Tylenol was TOXIC to the liver for decades. It's still over the counter.

Now they're blaming autism on it?
Sorry, autism has a near 100% link with aluminum... Chris Exley study.
And you get most of the aluminum from shots

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Mad Hatter → UnionMember · 3 days ago edited
I'm a big Exley fan. Fiji water has reduced my son's seizures to almost 0 and his meds by 50%, but I don't recall him claiming Al causes autism. Al he claims causes dementia

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Bradens Mom → Mad Hatter · 3 days ago
Dementia and autism are almost identical

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orwellingood → UnionMember · 3 days ago
Nothing else can cause it or exacerbate it? Or ADHD, which all of you are conveniently ignoring? One precludes the other? Should mothers-to-be also load up on alcohol and cigs and some street drugs too while pregnant as well and go on an all-McDonalds diet? Nothing bad will happen, right?

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Jennifo → orwellingood · 2 days ago
Of course many things can facilitate disease or illnesses. There is no one answer always. It is usually an 'onion' approach to health (multi layers). I have studied that parasites & bad gut health is a leading precursor for most diseases like autism & psychological disorders (dementia, Parkinsons, to name a small few).

Our bodies absorb everything we put in it & on it. We cannot escape the ramifications of that. That is why proper detoxing is so critical.

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Trbobitch → UnionMember · 3 days ago
Boom - nailed it. Although I would say it's not just the aluminum in those shots causing harm.

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Silver · 3 days ago edited
LOL.... Sacrifice a bishop to save the queen.....
It's like the most dangerous food is cucumbers. Why? All people who died of heart attacks ate cucumbers. Also, all people who died in accidents ate them as well. And so on.
The massive campaign to find a scapegoat and distract attention from MMR and other jabs.
Tylenol in pregnancy caused autism in 3 year old baby? Give me a break

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Caroline Cary Davidson → Silver · 3 days ago
sorry but you're analogy lacks logic, not to mention basic understanding of human biology and mechanisms of actions of drugs/chemicals.
the autism community has seen an observational connection for a good 20 yrs already. the science is finally catching up. BUT you cannot look at a neurodevelopmental disorder and try to prove a straight line cause/effect. ASD, ADHD, etc are ALL multi-factorial.
yes I took Tylenol while pregnant BUT, as an older mom (42 when I had my ASD son) I also had a mouthful of deteriorating mercury amalgam fillings. AND had been on meds for ulcerative colitis, on and off, since the age of 18. a perfect storm scenario. add about 20 jabs up up until my son was 18 months old... BAM.
imho, they're going after Tylenol because they can, deep pockets and all. is it a smoking gun kind of thing? heck no. but I certainly wouldn't call it a scapegoat. more a contributor.

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lakewoodsteve → Caroline Cary Davidson · 2 days ago
Silver, best demonstrates, "A truth's initial commotion is directly proportional to how deeply the lie was believed. When a well-packaged web of lies has been sold gradually to the masses over generations, [as Pharma has] the truth will seem utterly preposterous and its speaker a raving lunatic." Welcome to the world of raving lunatics! by Donald James Wood!
Or, "My "mind" has been made up,... Don't confuse me with facts."
Steve

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orwellingood → Silver · 3 days ago
Covid jabs cause myocarditis. Does that mean nothing else can cause myocarditis? Absolutely hysterical. Shall we refund Johnson & Johnson the 2017 settlement money it paid for liver damage while we're at it because obviously innocent wildlife Tylenol can't cause any harm, only other things determined by you and your friends?

8 3 · Reply · Share ›

Guido Vandeven · 3 days ago
Of course there can be an epigenetic element, they don't like the term causation instead they use correlation. Talking about Aluminum, heavy metals, glyphosate.
EMF's so why not Tylenol but then I remember Healey Bernadine ex NIH executive saying the study has never been done WHY in some children some vaccines do cause AUTISM?

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vgupta123 · 3 days ago
Why are the lawsuits only focused on prenatal exposure to Tylenol when so much evidence exists that postnatal exposure to Tylenol (e.g., during circumcision) is equally dangerous?

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orwellingood → vgupta123 · 3 days ago
Maybe because lawsuits tend to stay focused, like the previous settlement that focused on liver damage? Maybe there have been such lawsuits but they haven't caught your attention or entered the public eye? Maybe you could start such a lawsuit yourself if you have standing? Before a lawsuit is filed, we can all ask "why hasn't that lawsuit been filed?" as much as we wish.

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John Best · 3 days ago edited
How come nobody blamed Tylenol in 1999 when we learned that all autism is caused by mercury? Does this mean flu shots full of mercury are safe now?

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Caroline Cary Davidson → John Best · 3 days ago
seriously over simplistic, sorry. there is no ONE 'cause'. there are multiple contributing factors. I have a niece with a 5 yr old with autism (& ex of misconeceptah). little girl had NO jabs, mom hadn't had any jab since her childhood, BUT she took a ton of Tylenol (for back pain) and was on an SSRI Rx before she found out she was pregnant.
I am acquainted with a few families with kids with autism, also no jabs but living on property with direct exposure to farming pesticides
very few medical conditions that I have ever heard of have only ONE cause, like non-smokers developing lung cancer. ALL are multi-factorial.

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